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11 February 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY, JOINT INTELLIGENCE GROUP
Att: Colonel Joseph Halvarson

59-416

Processing of Captured Documents

1. Pursuant to verbal request there is forwarded herewith a summary of the handling of captured documents for intelligence purposes.

2. For purposes of this report, captured German and Italian documents will be considered as one group and captured Japanese documents as another group.

3. Captured German and Italian documents.

Captured German and Italian documents are held in custody by the Department of the Army. Accordingly, this office maintains a screening team physically located in the Pentagon. This team rapidly screens through the large volume of documents continually being received there and makes abstracts of the very small percentage of these that have some intelligence value. These abstracts are reproduced in card form called the Intelligence Card Catalogue (ICC) card and disseminated to the interested agencies. When the screening and abstracting process has been completed, the documents are returned to the shelves of GMDs. The second step in the processing is the exploitation of these documents to meet intelligence needs. Requirements are received from the IAC agencies and from branches of CIA for information or specific translation. Further, continuing projects are set up in this office to obtain certain types of needed information. To answer these requirements and the work of the projects means a selection of the documents abstracted. These documents are then borrowed from GMDs and the required information extracted and collated in this office and forwarded to the requestor and interested agencies. When these documents have been exploited in this way, the documents are returned to the GMDs. This then completes the processing--the document has been screened, abstracted, and all required information of intelligence value extracted.

4. Captured Japanese documents.

The processing of captured Japanese documents follows the general outline given above for German documents. However, the following exceptions should be noted,

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a. Captured Japanese documents are received and held in custody by this office until it has been determined that they have no information of intelligence value.

b. Abstracts of captured Japanese documents appear in published Accession Lists which are disseminated to the interested agencies.

c. When it has been determined that these documents have no information of intelligence value, they are declassified and offered for transfer to the IAC agencies. If they decline, they are then transferred to the National Archives or Library of Congress.

5. This then is a general outline of the processing of captured documents for intelligence purposes, and it is sincerely hoped that it will meet with your satisfaction.

J. J. BAGNALL,
Deputy Chief, Foreign Documents Branch.

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